

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through three programs: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America. Members and volunteers serve with national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies to help meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas. The Corporation is part of USA Freedom Corps, a White House initiative to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, and help all Americans answer the President's Call to Service.

PRESIDENT'S CALL TO SERVICE

President Bush created USA Freedom Corps to coordinate citizen volunteer efforts both domestically and abroad. As part of that initiative, the President called on all Americans to devote the equivalent of at least two years of their lives—4,000 hours—to service and volunteerism. National and community service programs are one way to answer the President's call. Senior Corps taps the skills, talents, and experience of older Americans to help solve pressing social problems, while AmeriCorps gives citizens the opportunity to perform intensive service over an uninterrupted period. Learn and Serve America, which links classroom studies with service in the community, is an important and effective way of instilling the habits of good citizenship and fostering a lifelong ethic of service among young Americans.

SENIOR CORPS

Senior Corps taps the skills, talents, and experience of more than 500,000 Americans age 55 and older to meet a wide range of community challenges through three programs: RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions. RSVP volunteers conduct safety patrols for local police departments, participate in environmental projects, provide intensive educational services to children and adults, and respond to natural disasters, among other activities. Foster Grandparents serve one-on-one as tutors and mentors to young people with special needs. Senior Companions help homebound seniors and other adults maintain independence in their own homes.

AMERICORPS

Fifty thousand Americans are serving their communities 20 to 40 hours a week through AmeriCorps. Most AmeriCorps members are selected by and serve with

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local and national nonprofit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, City Year, Teach for America, and Boys and Girls Clubs of America, as well as with a host of smaller community organizations, both secular and faith-based. In exchange for a year of service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of \$4,725 that can be used to pay for college or graduate school, or to pay back qualified student loans. About half the members also receive a modest living allowance of \$9,300 and health benefits.

AmeriCorps operates in a decentralized manner that gives a significant amount of responsibility to states and local nonprofit groups. Roughly three-quarters of all AmeriCorps grant funding goes to Governor-appointed state service commissions, which award grants to nonprofit groups to respond to local needs. Most of the remainder of the grant funding is distributed by the Corporation directly to multi-state and national organizations through a competitive grants process.

AmeriCorps also administers two programs that operate somewhat differently but are still designed to assist and increase the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations and public agencies. AmeriCorps*VISTA, which has approximately 6,000 members, focuses on eradicating poverty and helping to meet the needs of people living in low-income communities nationwide. AmeriCorps*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a residential

program for more than 1,200 members ages 18 to 24. Based on a military model, it sends members in teams of 10 to 14 to help nonprofit groups provide disaster relief, preserve the environment, build homes for low-income families, tutor children, and meet other challenges. Because members are trained in CPR, first aid, and mass care and can be assigned to new duties on short notice, they are particularly well-suited to meeting the emerging homeland security needs of the nation.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

Learn and Serve America provides grants to schools, colleges, and nonprofit groups to support efforts to engage students in community service linked to academic achievement and the development of civic skills. This type of learning, called service-learning, improves communities while preparing young people for a lifetime of responsible citizenship. In addition to providing grants, Learn and Serve America serves as a resource on service and service-learning to teachers, faculty members, schools, and community groups.

MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the Corporation or any of its programs, visit www.nationalservice.org or call 202-606-5000 or TTY 202-565-2799. To learn more about the USA Freedom Corps and the President's Call to Service, visit www.usafreedomcorps.gov or call 877-USA-CORPS (877-872-2677).

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